

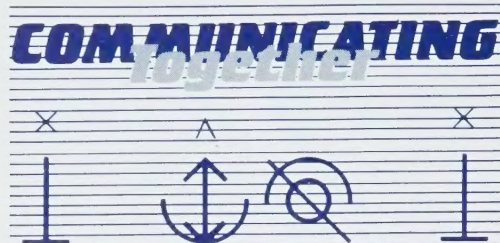
COMMUNICATING *Together*

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Managing Editor: Ann Kennedy
Advertising: Lorne Mitchell
Illustrations: Audrey King

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Communicating Together is published quarterly as a means of sharing the experiences, systems and techniques of non-speaking people with their families, communities and the professionals who work with them. Special attention is given to the non-reader's augmentative communication system and the role of Blissymbolics.

The Blissymbolics Communication Institute was established in 1975 to facilitate the use of Blissymbolics as a communication system for non-speaking persons around the world.

BCI Affiliates and Information Centres are situated in —

Canada: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec

United States: Alabama, Florida, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota

Other than North America: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Venezuela, West Germany, Zimbabwe

Through BCI and its Affiliates, over 8,000 instructors have been trained worldwide.

Blissymbolics is a system providing comprehensive communication for the non-speaking non-reading person. It can be used with a variety of picture systems and technologies, and with traditional orthography — offering a basic structure for the non-reader's augmentative communication system.

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BCI is a member of the Canadian Rehabilitation Council For The Disabled (CRCD)

An Unexpected Challenge



by Keith Spencer

Keith and Margaret Spencer are the parents of twin boys. Jason is a normal physically active 4-year-old; Andrew has cerebral palsy. Here, Keith Spencer writes with candor and simplicity of his family's determination and dedication in their struggle to meet this unexpected — and rewarding — challenge.

"I think there are two in there!" said the nurse in St. Mary's Hospital, Montreal, as my wife Margaret was wheeled into the delivery room. Indeed, she was correct. Within the next hour, much to our surprise, two boys were born — Jason, followed thirty-six minutes later by Andrew.

However, the shock and excitement at having twin boys soon turned to concern when Andrew began experiencing some difficulties and had to be rushed to the Neonatal Unit at the nearby Jewish General Hospital. There he was to stay under intensive care for the next three weeks. In the meantime, Margaret and Jason came home and we learned to cope with one baby whilst preparing for Andrew's eventual homecoming. (Preparations included buying extra clothes, a crib and a car seat plus an extra large pram; we had, of course, only provided for one baby!)

A New Chapter

Thus started a new chapter in our lives. By the time Andrew came home, we had been advised that he might have suffered some brain damage at birth. Naturally we were very concerned about this, but nothing specific had been identified as to long-term impact. We could, of course, see some differences between the boys: Andrew was smaller than Jason and required a special formula and medication; he also needed more constant attention and was generally more irritable than his brother. And, as the months passed, we noticed still more differences between Jason and Andrew, particularly in their gross-

motor movements and rate of growth. Both boys were a handful, but we were especially feeling the impact of Andrew's demands on our time.

During this period, Andrew's progress had been carefully followed by the Montreal Children's Hospital, and when he was 8 months old we were advised that he had cerebral palsy. Both Margaret and I were



Andrew Spencer

stunned, shocked, angry and upset at this news. From the outset we had known Andrew had "some problems," but these had never been articulated and we were not prepared for this pronouncement, despite our growing concerns about his development.

Eventually, having come to grips with the "label" for Andrew's problem, our first thought was, "What can we do for him?" Naturally, we both wanted him to be able to do as much as possible, even though at that time we did not know his full limitations. Indeed, we were not going to accept any limitations!

Following a round of assessments at the Montreal Children's Hospital, Andrew attended physio- and occupational therapy sessions once or twice a week. Initially, both Margaret and I went with Andrew, and on some occasions Jason came too. By now Jason was getting into everything and learning to talk, while Andrew, in comparison, still had very limited physical

capabilities. We felt it was important for us all to learn as much as possible about Andrew's difficulties, as well as ways and means to overcome them.

Throughout the next fifteen months we had some successes, but one particular problem kept recurring: Andrew just did not like to sit and we could not find a chair which would support him comfortably. Consequently, life became very difficult and the search for the "perfect" chair began. We tried adapting highchair seats and car seats, and I made various foam rubber inserts, but none of these was satisfactory.

New Directions

With our experiments incomplete and our problem unresolved, we moved to Toronto following my transfer to a new job. I had arranged for a referral to the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre (OCCC), and in June of 1981, Andrew was assessed by the late Dr. John Whittaker, then Director of Outpatient's Services, and his team. We were subsequently referred to OCCC's HELP (Handling, Enrichment, Learning and Play) Program, which consisted of fifteen sessions of two hours a week. Once again we tried to participate as a family unit, joining in the therapy and discussion sessions as much as possible. The program was stimulating and informative, allowing for an in-depth assessment of Andrew by a multi-disciplinary team, while giving our family a sense of involvement, support and understanding.

In particular, it was most refreshing to see the physio- and occupational therapists attack the seating problem. It was quickly understood that Andrew needed some help, and various aids were loaned to us. Needless to say it was not long before Andrew had an appointment at OCCC's Seating Clinic and had been fitted with an insert for his stroller — a huge leap forward after two years of frustration!

An important element of the

HELP Program was the development of an attitude of self-sufficiency within the family unit. It was clear that many forms of assistance were available and encouraged; however, the essential component involved mobilizing our own resources as well as those in the community, in order to assist not only our physically handicapped child but others, too. We found that there were, in fact, many people we could turn to for assistance and advice while we formulated our own action plans. For example, we were put in touch with local regional day care authorities with a view to having Andrew participate in special education programs as a pre-schooler. This eventually led to both Andrew and Jason being accepted into a most stimulating and helpful program. An obvious bond had developed between the boys, and we considered it very important at this age that they start their schooling together.

Parents and Advocacy

As we settled into our new home and surroundings and began to develop contacts and ideas through HELP, we were introduced to a number of parents of physically handicapped children living in the Region of York, north of Toronto. After some initial guidance from the Easter Seal Society, the York Parents of Physically Handicapped Children Association (YORKPA) was formed. Our initial objective was to learn more about our children's special education needs and the facilities available for them, with particular reference to the Ontario Government's Bill 82, which essentially legislates for the provision of appropriate education facilities for all exceptional pupils. To this end, YORKPA obtained representation on the special education advisory committees for both the public and separate school boards in the Region of York.

A further YORKPA objective was to develop an awareness of personal computers and the impact these could have on the physically handicapped. This has proven to be exceptionally interesting and informative, and a number of parents and their children have become in-

volved. In January 1983, arrangements were made with the Aurora Public Library for access to their Apple Computers each Sunday afternoon. Although only a handful of families have become involved in this part of the work, it is indeed rewarding to see how knowledgeable and enthusiastic these parents and children have become. The real potential of personal computers for the physically handicapped has certainly not yet been fully realized, though there is no doubt that enormous benefits are possible.

Progress on All Fronts

When Andrew completed the HELP Program, he was launched into various follow-up sessions for physio-occupational and speech therapy at OCCC. By now it was obvious that while he had some severe physical problems and was unable to talk, he really could understand everything that was going on, and his cognitive abilities were apparent. His speech pathologist worked both with Andrew and my wife and I to seek ways and means to communicate. This involved videotaping sessions, self-critiques, etc. In addition, after some persuasion (again by Andrew's speech pathologist), Margaret and I enrolled in an evening course at OCCC, which taught the Hanen Early Language training method (a parent-centred language intervention program). This proved to be a most demanding activity, but nevertheless rewarding. It taught us that we must adapt our approach to communicating with Andrew; in particular it taught me to be much more patient.

By the Spring of 1982, Andrew had made progress on all fronts, though he still had a long way to go. At this time he was referred to the Augmentative Communication Service (ACS) at OCCC. The objective here was to start to develop a formal communication system for Andrew in recognition of his lack of speech capability. This, too, has proven to be interesting, hard work and rewarding. Andrew has started to learn to use Blissymbols and he now has 50 symbols on his Blissboard. He has been involved also in some evaluations

using Apple computers and special communications attachments. The essential message from ACS has been, once again, that the entire family should be involved. The whole approach has been, once more, to gain self-sufficiency and to develop Andrew's Blissymbol vocabulary and his use of it. I should note that under the guidance of ACS, Margaret has become very proficient. Both Jason and I try hard, too, but we could do with some improvement!

Coincident with Andrew's referral to ACS, we were advised of the formation of a new advocacy group directed toward the needs and problems of the non-speaking community. Known as "Communication Awareness and Action," the group has developed a set of objectives and is busy working on its first project — to develop an audiovisual presentation to enhance public awareness. As one of its chairmen, I have found this group to be both exciting and demanding. It is very stimulating to work with people who have such a profound and practical interest in this relatively unknown area. Here, too, I should mention that Margaret is also an active member.

Looking back on the past four years, we have seen Andrew increase his capabilities and become a happier, better adjusted child. He and Jason get along well (most of the time!), and it is very heartening to witness the understanding and camaraderie between them. Furthermore, Andrew is accepted totally by his schoolmates and the children in our neighbourhood, and they enjoy playing together.

We have come to learn that the challenges to be faced with a physically handicapped child are large and real, though we do feel that these can be partially overcome by a united family approach and a determination to treat the physically handicapped member as normally as possible. Of equal importance is an early start in the search for assistance and appropriate aids and therapy. This requires persistence, dedication and hard work. The rewards, however, far outweigh these efforts. There is nothing like seeing Andrew's smile as he achieves each new goal!□

International News



Ariel

by Marta Liberoff

Marta Liberoff is Director of the Institute of Language and Special Education, Buenos Aires, Argentina. She has lectured extensively and has written several papers relating to the application of Blissymbolics in the Spanish-speaking countries of South America.



Ariel

Ariel has Down's Syndrome and at 9 years of age is still only capable of unintelligible sounds. Born in Argentina, Ariel spent three years in Israel where he was introduced to Blissymbols. When he returned to Argentina at the end of 1981 and was settled in his new surroundings, we decided to try to continue using Blissymbols in his education program, in order to take advantage of the excellent beginning he had made in Israel.

Following an evaluation, we went ahead with Ariel's education program — two 30-minute symbols sessions every week. At the time of writing, he has had 32 sessions and is enjoying the work immensely.

We used the following steps in the education process:

- Teaching a symbol
- Generalizing
- Using the symbol to communicate effectively

This process was used with all symbols presented to Ariel, and as a result he now has a vocabulary of 50 symbols.

We presented symbols to Ariel according to his interests and inclinations. Initially he tended to choose pictographic symbols — nouns relating to objects in his daily life, parts of his body, members of his family and items used at school.

The form for teaching the symbols followed the usual pattern: object/symbol matching; character/symbol matching; labelling objects; receptive/expressive use of the symbols; training through discrimination between symbols; the application of a general symbol to different elements of the same class or grouping (i.e., the symbol for meal with different foods). Once Ariel could remember 12 symbols — *mother, father, house, chair, water, food, car, airplane, sun, cloud, door, window* — and distinguish them, the symbols were placed on a board, and we began to work on his capacity to select from among several symbols. The same procedure was carried through for all subsequent symbols.

As soon as Ariel's boards were completed, they were sent to his parents, his aides and to all members of his educational team (special instructor, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc). It then became necessary to establish a co-ordinated plan with the team to further stimulate his desire to communicate with his peers. Group activities also produced a more expressive use of symbols than individual instruction could have done. Up to the present time, Ariel has been using two-word utterances, such as verb/object (wash/face) and subject/verb (father/drive).

We have several things planned for the future, including refining the use of the symbols Ariel already knows, stimulating his expressive use of symbols and stimulating his use of simple sentences and phrases. Ariel has really progressed since he was first introduced to Blissymbols in Israel. We are confident his excellent progress will continue at our school in Argentina.□

New Home for IPCAS

At the last meeting of the International Project on Communication Aids for the Speech Impaired (IPCAS) held in Edinburgh, Scotland, April 11-12, 1983, arrangements were completed for the transfer of the International Secretariat from England to Canada. The organization responsible for the Secretariat since IPCAS' inception has been The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) located in London, England. The Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled (CRCDD) in Toronto will now be taking over the responsibility of administering the IPCAS projects and maintaining communication links among its members.

IPCAS was founded in 1980, as a program of international co-operation in the field of communication aids for the speech impaired. Member countries are Sweden, the United Kingdom, Canada and the U.S.A.

Canada welcomes the Secretariat at this exciting time in IPCAS' development. In the early years of IPCAS, attention had to be directed to the formation and initiation of projects and to the development of effective ways of interacting and communicating. IPCAS is now ready to implement many of its ideas, and is looking to include new member nations. Another important challenge for Canada!□

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Family and Community



Weekend Activities

with Andrew and Mark

Andrew Murphy of Toronto has been communicating with Blissymbols for several years. In this column, appearing in each issue, Andrew and his father Mark share their experiences and those of other families with the special perspective of people who communicate in a special way.

Most of us, both adults and children, look forward to weekends when we can enjoy our favourite leisure activities. Whether we enjoy participating in very physical activities such as skiing or jogging; attending events such as hockey games or a symphony; spending time at home with hobbies like gardening or furniture refinishing; or whether we simply read or listen to music, most of us do what we wish, when we wish. For handicapped people, however, this is not always the case. Some activities they cannot do themselves, and must rely upon others to assist them, or they need someone to take them to an event. This dependence on others can often lead to frustration and resentment. Recently, Andrew and his classmates had a discussion about their favourite weekend activities. Here is what they had to say:

*** ** *

Andrew

On Saturdays I go to the theatre or the movies, shop for food at the market or sometimes I go to the library. I also watch TV. Sundays, my family and I go to church. Sometimes we go to a restaurant for lunch. We also go for walks with the dog, and I drive my electric wheelchair around the neighbourhood. Sometimes I am very bored, or other times I am lonesome for friends. My sister usually plays with her friends, and my brothers go out with their friends, and I am alone. I have a few good friends, but I



don't see them very often because they are around 20 years old and busy with other things. My mother does not let me call them to come and visit. I have no friends my age who come to visit or play with me.

Ann

On weekends, I type and watch television. I help my mother with the washing and the shopping list, and I shop for clothing. I go to church on Sunday with two friends. Sometimes my dad and I visit my grandfather. He lives in a senior citizen's home, and it is depressing. I love to visit my grandmother who lives in her own home. She makes the best apple pie in the world. I also go to shows sometimes.

Dawn

On Saturdays, I get up by 9:00 a.m. and go downstairs to watch my TV show, the Frankenstein show. It is really good. When my mom gets up, I go into the kitchen to talk to her. After breakfast, my grandad comes for a visit. I love my grandad. After he leaves I get on the phone to

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talk to David, my boyfriend. Mommy lets me watch The Love Boat Saturday night, so I stay up till 10:00 p.m. Sundays I sleep in.

Liam

On weekends, I go to the YMCA to swim and play games. My mother and I go shopping, and we eat out at a restaurant. Sometimes we go to the library, a movie or a play; sometimes we just stay home.

Marsha

Saturdays I go to Banbury Camp. It is for children 5 to 15 years old. In the afternoon we play on the pad on the floor and exercise; we also dance and eat. On Sunday, I go to church and help my mom do some cooking. Sometimes my friends visit and we play dolls.

* * * * *

As you can see, most of these children are dependent upon others for enjoyable weekend activities. Each of us can make their weekends a little brighter by spending more time with them.

We're Getting Letters . . .

From Minneapolis

We have received letters from the parents of three Blissymbol users in Minneapolis. They all attend Dowling Elementary School and were taught to use Blissymbols by speech therapist, Florence Wertz. Here is one of the stories. The others will follow in future issues.

Lynn Norback, now 7 years old, was born with cerebral palsy. Although her vocal equipment seemed natural at birth, it became obvious that Lynn wasn't able to produce sounds her parents could recognize as speech. Soon her parents realized that this lack of ability to communicate would prove to be a much greater handicap than her spasticity.

In 1978, Lynn's parents ordered Blissymbol materials from Toronto, beginning with only three symbols: *food*, *drink* and *toilet*. When Lynn pointed to *drink*, she was given milk. When she pointed to *toilet*, she was taken to the bathroom. However, while in the bathroom, Lynn would also point to the bathroom sink. Picking up this clue, her

parents gave Lynn the symbol for water, only to discover much to their dismay that now when she wanted water, she would ask for 'toilet water.' Did she really prefer the water from the bathroom sink to the water from the kitchen tap? No, what she wanted was a bath!

That was the start. Even though Lynn was in a pre-kindergarten class most of the day, she was invited to visit the Blissymbol class daily for an hour in addition to working with her speech therapist, Mrs. Wertz. As her use of symbols grew, Lynn and her parents found they needed to cut and paste to develop new ideas, and also to use the combine symbol strategy to create new symbols. Eventually Lynn started work sessions, where she and her parents developed new symbols together.

To Lynn, CP stands for her 'charming personality'. She has also begun — slowly — to speak the words describing some of the Blissymbols, and when she can say a word, she skips the symbol altogether. When she wants her Blissymbol board, she makes a talking sign with her hands, like a jabbermouth. Lynn's sister Laura Beth, 10, thoroughly enjoys this new code and has shared it with her friends.

Computers, too, have become very important to many young handicapped children. Lynn learns best when she is the instigator of communication, and she now frequently asks for 'the think machine.'

Lynn and her parents are learning to be patient, but they can hardly contain their excitement about the new developments in computer technology for the handicapped.

Florence Wertz is hard at work completing an up-to-date computer program using Blissymbols and uses friendly exercises while incorporating these symbols into the learning process.

Blissymbols have truly touched the lives of Lynn and her family. Of course, Lynn would have grown and progressed without Blissymbols, but certainly at a much slower pace and with greater frustration, which in turn might have led to behaviour problems. Lynn's parents realize that non-speaking children are demanding more and more for themselves, and they believe that Florence Wertz has provided those in her care with guidance and understanding. Lynn's mother leaves us with these thought-provoking words:

Blissymbols — are they really a communication system, or are they the feeling of pure joy you experience when you are able to communicate for the first time with the one you love!

Don't forget to write and let us know what your experiences are. We all want to hear and to share.

Interested readers please write Andrew Murphy, 29 Kellythorne Drive, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada M3A 2L5.



Florence Wertz and Lynn work together on the Apple.

Sharing Ideas With Nora



Nora Rothschild, consultant with the Augmentative Communication Service of the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, heads up this regular column focusing on readers' questions, answers, problems and experiences.

This issue we have the opportunity to feature some of the questions and answers prepared for the Hamilton, Ontario community by the Hamilton-Wentworth Communications Collective. Many thanks to Barbara Rush and her team for offering to share their experience and expertise with our readers.

*** **

Q. I have a 5-year-old non-speaking child. His teacher and therapist feel he is ready to start using a combination of augmentative communication systems in order to communicate more effectively. Why must he start so young? Would it not be better to wait until he is older and can concentrate better?

A. Although a child may be unable to talk, he or she still has needs and ideas to express. Without a means of communicating, frustration is bound to occur for both the child and his listeners. A functional communication

system is also a necessary tool for learning. Educators must have some way to reach and interact with the child.

The early years are critical language-learning years; thus, early intervention is thought to be crucial to language and speech development. Frequently an augmentative communication system is simply a transitional tool as speech develops. Since it is difficult to know whether some children will be able to learn to speak, the use of an augmentative communication system is often recommended.

Whether the system becomes simply a transitional tool or a permanent alternative to speech becomes apparent as the child matures. It seems to be the case that it is not usually the child who has difficulty learning to use appropriate augmentative communication systems, but rather the listeners around the child who are not used to communicating in this new way.

*** **

Q. I have accepted the fact that my child needs an augmentative system in order to communicate all of his needs and wants. I do not understand, however, why he is being taught both sign language and Blissymbols. Isn't one system sufficient?

A. Whether a child learns one system or a combination of many will vary according to his or her physical and intellectual abilities. For example, signing is inappropriate for some physically disabled children, while Blissymbols are too complex for the severely learning disabled. Some of the other augmentative communication systems include the use of picture sets and traditional orthography. In addition, a child may be taught to use other techniques of pointing, body language, facial expression, etc. When an appropriate combination is used,

the systems are found to be complimentary.

Just as most children learn the sound, sight and meaning of a given word, the non-verbal child learns the sound, sight and meaning of stimulus items such as pictures, signs and/or symbols. One of the most obvious advantages of a signing system is that one's hands are always readily available and vocabulary is infinite.

Of course, with any system one can only communicate with others who are familiar with that system. For example, a communication board (pictures, symbols and/or traditional orthography) may be bulky, and vocabulary limited by the physical confines of the communication board. But since a word always (hopefully) accompanies the stimulus item, one can communicate with any listener who is able to read. Thus, an important skill for children to learn when using such a combination, is which system to use with any given "listener."

I hope these ideas from Hamilton have been useful. All questions and comments are welcome.

Readers interested in sharing ideas with Nora should address their correspondence to: Nora Rothschild, Communicating Together, Blissymbolics Communication Institute, 350 Rumsey Road, Toronto, Ontario M4G 1R8.

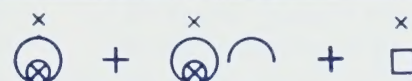
NOW AVAILABLE

The Proceedings to the Second International Conference on Non-Speech Communication held in Toronto from November 15 to 17, 1982, is available from the Blissymbolics Communication Institute. The papers are divided into five categories: Identification, Assessment, Evaluation; Communication Systems; Instructional Considerations; Special Populations and Settings; and Technology. An index of authors is included.

Cost is \$8 Canadian (\$6 U.S.) plus \$2 postage and handling.

**This section of
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Toronto, Ontario.**

Machines, Computers and Things



From Our Mouth To God's Ear



by Susan J. Sansone

Susan Sansone, a speech and language pathologist, is currently employed as a specialist in augmentative communication systems in the Adult Day Treatment Program of the Suffolk Association for the Help of Retarded Children. She is also a Senior Pre-sentor for the Blissymbolics Communication Institute and Director of the Suffolk Association's Blissymbolics Resource Center.

Over the past several years, the Blissymbolics Resource Center of the Suffolk Association for the Help of Retarded Children, Bohemia, New York, has been working in concert with the Blissymbolics Communication Institute, Toronto, Canada, to develop raised symbols. Two formats were initially designed and field tested with multiply handicapped mentally retarded individuals who were unable to utilize Braille and who required an augmentative for speech and/or reading. One format was a raised rubber symbol mat; the other a matching set of plasticized sand print flash cards. The project was funded by RTU (the Rehabilitation Technology Unit of the National Research Council, Toronto).

The results of the initial field test were tabulated by Dr. James Waters, a former AHRC psychologist, now working in Boston. The field test indicated that raised Blissymbols could be distinguished tactually by mentally retarded individuals; also that proficiency of symbol acquisition and use are directly linked to I.Q. and mental age, as is evidenced by the sighted mentally retarded. However, both the rubber mat and the sand print cards were reported to be inadequate: the rubber mat was ex-

pensive and complex, and did not allow for individualization of symbols according to size and vocabulary needs; the plasticized sand print cards were not practical or durable. Thus, while Blissymbols appeared to be a viable alternative to Braille for visually impaired mentally retarded individuals, both experimental mediums were inadequate.

When it became apparent that we were 'dead ending' with the project, I consulted with Dr. Robert Gale, Director of Optometric Services at

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our agency. He had just seen an advertisement for a machine called the Thermoform Brailon Duplicator and had written for information to determine the suitability of this process for duplicating raised Blissymbols.

In the months that followed, several samples, letters and phone calls passed between Long Island, New York, and Pico Rivera, California, home of the American Thermoform. Simultaneously,

Thermoform Brailon Duplicator



General Use — The Thermoform Brailon Duplicator makes inexpensive copies of Braille, and embossed drawings and objects using a vacuum forming process. The end product is a permanent copy on a sheet of durable paper-like plastic material, called Brailon.

Shirley McNaughton of BCI began forwarding information about a Thermoform process developed in the Netherlands that our Swedish friends were exploring in an effort to produce raised Blissymbols. Polly Edman of Solna, Sweden, very generously provided the first samples of Thermoform-raised Blissymbols. Sheri Hunnicutt of the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, shared a more extensive array of Ms. Edman's Thermoform symbols when we met in Toronto at the Non-Speech Conference this past November.

The Non-Speech Conference provided the forum for Dr. Waters, Shirley McNaughton and myself to present the findings of the initial field test of raised Blissymbols. It also gave us an opportunity to brainstorm with professionals from around the world who are directly

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Telephone: (514) 335-1058

involved with visually impaired individuals. All course participants agreed that the Thermoform process looked extremely promising because it had successfully been used to duplicate Braille and because it was a durable, inexpensive plastic medium that allowed for individualization of symbols according to size and vocabulary needs.

Shirley and I were once again planning and dreaming. However, the ever present dollar sign loomed over us, clouding our dreams. Although the Thermoform Brailon Duplicator was a relatively inexpensive machine, it still appeared unattainable considering the current economic climate within our two countries. I know we both said silent prayers that the funding would be found to develop Blissymbols in this medium, in order to unlock the world of communication for yet another handicapped population.

The Jewish people have an expression for prayers such as these: 'It

should go from your mouth to God's ear.' Well, God was listening and he heard. When I arrived home from the Non-Speech Conference, Dr. Gale greeted me excitedly. He had not only located a Brailon Thermoform Duplicator in our area, but he said it would be loaned to us so that we could continue our research with raised Blissymbols.

Thanks to Georgine Vollkhammer, Director for the Nassau-Suffolk Division of the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, and Mary Ann Bonner, Vocational Counsellor, we now have the Brailon Duplicator in our agency's print shop, and we will be able to provide Thermoform-raised Blissymbols at low cost to all interested individuals.

Please direct all enquiries and requests to me, Susan J. Sansone, Director, Blissymbolics Resource Center, Suffolk Association for the Help of Retarded Children, 2900 Veterans Memorial Highway, Bohemia, N.Y., 11716 U.S.A.

And in other countries...

Many innovations in equipment for non-speaking people have come about through the persistent efforts of dedicated professionals. As Sue Sansone's article shows, there were several contributors to the development of raised symbols for the visually impaired.

It's interesting that the same week Mrs. Sansone's article arrived for *Communicating Together*, a letter was received from Adelaide, Australia, announcing that a Blissymbol board has been developed there for a 10-year-old blind cerebral palsied boy. He is being taught by his mother and is learning to combine a small number of symbols to create many meanings.

It seems the U.S.A., Sweden and Australia have all been communicating together with symbols you feel!...S.M.□

THE MISSING LINK !

THE PICTURE COMMUNICATION SYMBOLS

The tool you have needed to save hours in making professional-looking, individualized communication aids. This set of picture symbols was designed specifically for non-verbal communication programs. From the August '82 ASHA Journal Materials Review:

(The PCS materials) "... should be considered as an integral part of resources for clinicians working with the non-speaking population". "...a valuable time saving tool". "...versatile, relatively inexpensive". "...appropriate for all age levels, and clearly written."

Description: The PCS are composed primarily of simple black and white drawings that reproduce well on any copying machine. Some words that cannot be pictured easily are printed in bold type for use with higher level clients. The over 700 words represented are provided in both a 1" and 2" size for added flexibility in use. The drawings are organized into six different word categories and are contained in a 3-ring binder. A guide is included which provides specific instructions and suggestions on how to use the symbols effectively. Sample grids for both the 1" and 2" symbols are also provided.



How to Order: Send \$36.00 plus \$3.60 (or \$5.40 foreign sales) for postage and handling to:

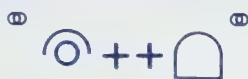
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Minnesota residents add 6% sales tax. Purchase orders accepted payable net 30 days.

Write for our free brochure for more information on the PCS and our other products !

Permission is granted to reproduce the symbols over and over again !

Perspective



An Interview with Lyle Lloyd



Lyle L. Lloyd is Professor and Chairman of Special Education, and Professor of Audiology and Speech Sciences at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana. He is also currently serving as Vice-President of the American Association in Mental Deficiency for Speech Pathology and Audiology. Over twenty years of his professional activity have been devoted to clinical/educational research primarily in the area of severe communication disorders. In his six years at Purdue, he has established a major research-oriented doctoral program in the area of non-speech communication.

It was in the early sixties in Kansas at the Parsons State Hospital and Training Centre that I experienced my first major immersion into the area of severe communication problems. It was a period of time when most people in the field were concentrating heavily on syntax and the structure of language, and there was little emphasis on communication or communicative intent. However, working with the severely handicapped helped all of us see the importance of this new emphasis on communication.

At this time, one of my colleagues, an audiologist named Georgia Girardeau, and I worked together with a girl who was profoundly hearing impaired, severely retarded

and had behaviour problems as well. Her program at the school for the deaf had been interpreted as inappropriate for her. She was the first retarded person with whom Georgia and I had tried manual signs, and the improvement was significant. Once she had been given a way to communicate she made excellent progress. In fact, it became quite clear that though she was retarded, she wasn't nearly as retarded as she had been judged to be. Her behaviour also improved a great deal. The ability to communicate had been the key to improving almost every problem area experienced by this individual.

During this period of time there were, of course, others in other parts of the country who were doing similar work. It was this overall effort in the early sixties, those early successes, that started the ball rolling. Subsequently signing was used a great deal with retarded individuals, and some time later with the autistic as well. It was an entry into a new approach to communication that continued into the early seventies with Blissymbolics and other non-speech systems.

In the late sixties I moved from Parsons to Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C., the only college in the world designed for the deaf. My work there primarily involved working with graduate students who were training to become audiologists and/or educators of the deaf. That experience helped me to appreciate further the importance of American Sign Language (ASL), the manual communication of the deaf in the States, and in parts of Canada. Since that time, ASL has been used extensively with the retarded and other severely handicapped persons.

Most of my clinical and research experience has involved the use of what we call the unaided systems of communication, systems that do not require anything other than the body or parts of the body — hands, arms, face, eyes — for communication. These include the systems involving the simplest gestures — pointing, grimacing the face, etc. —

as well as the more elaborate linguistic systems, such as ASL and those variations of ASL that can be coded to the same syntax as the English language.

I should point out, however, that there is a difference between the way we sign when we're communicating with the retarded and when we are "speaking" ASL, the sign language of native deaf signers. In signing with the retarded, we use manually coded English; that is, we use the signs in the same word order as they would appear in English, to be sure we do not give confusing messages. This is a major change from the sign order used by native deaf signers. Manually coded English is a contrived system especially developed for educational purposes, and it does work well within that context.

It's difficult to give you an example without being able to show the accompanying gestures, but I will try. One example that I use frequently with my classes is to ask a person who uses sign to indicate to me, "There is a very beautiful woman." Now, if they were to use manually coded English, they would say every one of those words, and would sign each word at the same time: THERE IS A VERY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. However, ASL does not need a sign for each of those six English words. If the native deaf signer were to say that sentence, he or she would indicate "there," not by using the pointing sign as we did above when we pointed to the beautiful woman, but instead by indicating "there" by first facing the woman and signing WOMAN at the same time, and by signing BEAUTIFUL as we did above. However, to communicate "very" as in "very beautiful," he or she would do one of two things: either repeat the sign for BEAUTIFUL twice, or change the emphasis of the sign for BEAUTIFUL and make it more emphatic. Either way, the meaning would change from beautiful to very beautiful.

We sometimes talk about gestures being universal, yet we know that in

one country what might be a positive gesture, in another country could even be obscene. That's something we have to keep in mind — to take what we know about the world and people and cultures, and try to use that knowledge to better understand individuals who have different experience from our own.

I haven't seen what I would call a real universal symbol system. What I have seen are a lot of variations. For example, I have a slide of a Canadian road sign that depicts a cup, knife and fork, which is clearly meant to inform the traveller that food is nearby. Well, when I travelled in Taiwan I never once saw that symbol, though I did see a road sign depicting a bowl containing a couple of chopsticks.

At any rate, a number of possibilities have been opening up, particularly for those who are physically handicapped. The communication boards are getting better and better, leading right into the electronic options and other electronically assisted devices that are creating even greater possibilities. Clinicians and teachers are also forcing researchers to be clearer about what their research means in practical terms; they're asking tougher, more practical questions.

In our graduate program at Purdue, which is strongly research oriented, we've made it mandatory that a student have previous clinical and/or educational experience in order to be admitted to our doctoral program in special education. In a research-oriented program such as ours, it is important that we have a complementary distribution of experiences and skills, in order to attack the more significant problems within the non-speech communication field. In fact, the three doctoral students working with me now have previous training and experience in psychology, special education and speech pathology.

Generally speaking, our research tends to look at things in a broad way relative to non-speech communications. We are trying to find out more about the various systems, and the symbols and the approaches being used. We are trying to find out what it is about these systems that we can manipulate, exploit,

enhance, in order to make teaching easier, in order to make learning the symbol systems easier. It's the primary area I'm now working in, as are most of my students. Of course, in a good research environment students need to be free to interpret as they wish and to explore all the different facets of a subject, and at Purdue we are all free to do that.

All in all I am very happy about what we now see occurring in the field of non-speech communication. There is a more ecumenical, much broader view of the field, a broader application in practice and a much broader and better approach in terms of research. We are looking at what people *can* do rather than what they *can't* do, and are beginning to put into practice the idea that unless there is a very special need, most disabled individuals do not have to be in a separate facility or institution. Sometimes it is more practical, but by and large everyone benefits from the opportunity to mix with each other.

Back in the sixties, those of us who were working clinicians or researchers tended to work with only one approach, or maybe a couple, but rarely did we look carefully at the wide variety of systems or the work being done elsewhere. However, in the past five years, most of us who have been actively involved in non-speech communication have started using a wider variety of systems. We are concentrating on finding the right system for the right individual in the right setting, and are looking as far afield as we have to, to find them.

What we've seen in the seventies is a strong wish to communicate with each other — teachers, clinicians, researchers, everyone. We've all realized that we can't have an efficient and effective clinical or educational program unless we know and understand as much as there is to know about all the systems available. Just the fact that we're doing more research is a very good thing in itself. As we do more research we're bound to learn more; we're bound to get better. □

A POET BREAKS FREE

A Fragile Tree — Has Roots

by John C. Walker



Thinking proudly,
They don't understand
Throwing your mind to the sky
Just as the sun is rising.

Try to realize,
A life with chains and double
locks
This body of mine.

Fifty poems in an exceptional book of poetry by a young man who has never walked or spoken.

Filled with compassion,
understanding and courage.

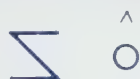
Beautifully designed; in hard cover. \$12.95

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Blissymbol Talk




This section focuses on the Blissymbolics system itself. For those already familiar with Blissymbolics, new symbols and new ways of looking at the system are introduced. For those new to the system, an introduction to standard Blissymbols is given, including new ways to use the symbols. The quiz is for everyone.


For New Symbol Users

People symbols, symbols from which they are derived and one symbol which is used often with the people symbols, give many new meanings.

man

 a combination of male (half-sized action symbol) + person


woman

 a combination of female (half-sized creation symbol) + person


person

 human being standing with feet turned out


action

 from shape of volcano cone, which C.K. Bliss says represents "one of the primeval actions of our earth"

creation, nature

 an equal-sided triangle: C.K. Bliss points out that the Greeks considered the equal-sided triangle to be the simplest and most harmonious geometrical creation

protection

 shape of a roof, suggesting protection afforded by a roof

father



mother



parent



activity



grandfather



grandmother



grandparent



work



A Symbol Quiz

1. After studying the symbols on this page, draw the symbols for:

- a) surrogate father
- b) foster mother
- c) paternal grandmother

2. Give the meaning for the following symbols:



Symbol Explanations

Blissymbols for Use, by Barbara Hehner, Toronto: Blissymbolics Communication Institute, 1980.

Teaching and Learning

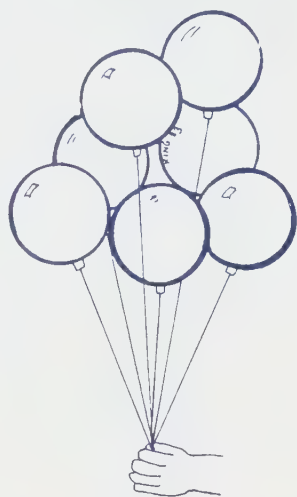


Teaching the Blissymbol Alphabet

As you will remember, our Inaugural Issue (Fall, 1982) introduced the new Blissymbol Alphabet Song, an excellent way to become familiar with Blissymbols and a lot of fun to sing. Introduced at that time (and continuing in the last issue, Winter, 1983) were alphabet cards designed to compliment the song and help teach the Blissymbol Alphabet. This issue features the next five cards in the series. Readers interested in collecting the full set are welcome to write to BCI for copies of the first two issues of *Communicating Together* while they last (see inside front cover for details). The alphabet card series will continue in upcoming issues.



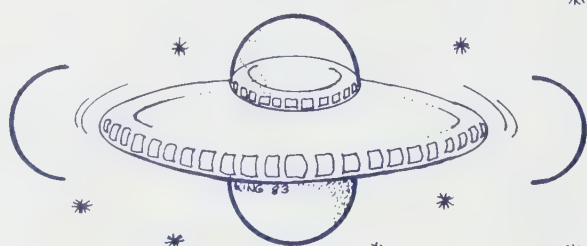
WHEELS LEAD TO CIRCLES



LARGE, THEN...



SMALL TO START



LARGE HALF CIRCLES FOLLOW NEXT



THEN ANY OTHER PART



Blissymbol Alphabet Stories

Last issue we introduced the first of three stories by Nancy Lageer designed to help children learn the Blissymbol Alphabet. Knowing her students loved stories and pictures, Miss Lageer, a Blissymbol classroom teacher at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, created several stories with accompanying illustrations. As each story is told, Miss

Lageer associates the story-line with the Blissymbol shapes, giving the children auditory clues from listening to the story, and visual clues from the pictures.

Here is the second story in the series. The last story will appear in our summer issue.

Readers are encouraged to adapt the stories and pictures to meet individual teaching situations. Write in with your comments or tell us about any other ideas you have for teaching the Blissymbol Alphabet.



Mother Bakes Some Cakes

- One day Mom baked a **big round** cake
- and a **little round** cupcake.

When she opened the oven

- △ **half the big round** cake was gone

and so was **half the little** round cupcake

- so she baked some **squares**
- and a **long pan** of date loaf.

When she opened the oven

- **half the squares** were gone
- and so was **half the long pan** of date loaf
- △ so she baked a **fat piece** of **pie**.
- I'll **stop** now she said.
- △ But **part** of the **pie** was gone too.

This section of
Communicating Together
is sponsored by
Arnold B. Irwin
of Irwin Toy Ltd.
Toronto, Ontario.

Starting Young

by Faith Carlson and
Catherine George

Faith Carlson and Catherine George are speech pathologists with the Meyer Children's Rehabilitation Institute of Omaha Nebraska, an institute serving professionals and parents in Nebraska's heavily populated rural areas. Both work with disabled pre-school children, and are primarily concerned with programs emphasizing parent participation. Here, they discuss the importance of parent/professional team training to ensure the earliest possible intervention on behalf of the "at-risk" child.

In the past, speech-language pathologists did not see children until speech failed to develop normally. Now, some of these children are being identified earlier as at-risk children, and are being referred earlier (under one year of age). Many are candidates for non-speech or augmentative communication techniques. Some of these babies will eventually speak, but on a much delayed timetable. These children will only temporarily need non-speech methods, so that thoughts and ideas can be expressed as they occur. Other children will need non-speech all their lives.

Children through the ages have learned communication best on their parents' knees. The same is true for non-speakers. Early intervention for these children must include parent training, where parents, professionals and the child work as a team.

The major steps involved in such training (in order of priority) are as follows:

1. **Identify the child as at-risk.**
Many parents are aware of their child's physiological condition, but have not been told that this may make it difficult for the child to develop speech.



2. **Let the parents know that something can and will be done to help their child.** Speech is simply a vehicle for communicating, and there are alternate ways to communicate. In fact, some at-risk children appear to learn how to speak because of, not in spite of, non-speech training methods. This should help dispel the old wives' tale that says, "Children won't learn to talk unless you force them to speak."



Child: "I can feel by the way Mom wiggled my foot that it's bath time."

Mom: "I see by your movements that you're excited about playing in the water."

PORTABLE DISPLAY FOLDERS/ COMMUNICATION BOARDS (2 sizes available)

The most commonly used board, the 7½" (19 cm.) x 17½" (44 cm.) tri-folder, is capable of containing 350 symbols per side for a total capacity of 700 symbols.

Price: \$7

A smaller more compact display, the menu folder, is capable of holding 250 symbols in four separate sleeves. Good for beginning symbol users, this folder measures 6" x 9" and is easy to carry and store.

Price: \$9

Available, in Canada only, from Blissymbolics Communication Institute.

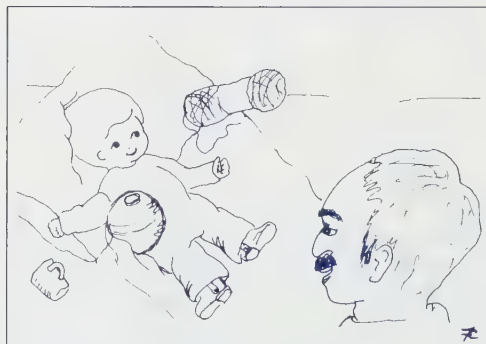
3. **Help parents identify their own and their child's communication styles.** All at-risk children and their parents communicate in some way, and these early communication behaviours and interactions are the starting point for early intervention. Some parents need help in identifying and documenting how these communications are occurring.



Child: "I can't make this thing work."

Parent: "I'll hold it in your hand so you can shake it."

Normal speech development moves along a continuum from the early cry to babbling and eventually to speech. Non-speakers need to move along a parallel continuum. The non-speakers who eventually use formal sign language will babble in generalized body movement. Children who eventually use ETRAN* boards will be able to babble using their eyes.



Child: "I wonder what this new thing is?"

Dad: "I can see by your eyes that you're curious about this ball of wool."

*An upright frame with some type of coding or graphic system display (letters, numbers, symbols, pictures), to which the user directs his eye gaze in order to communicate his/her message to the receiver.

Non-speakers with additional motor problems don't get a chance to move through their world independently and discover the concepts that lead to language. Toys, activities and daily living routines need to be adapted so that these children *can* move through, feel and exercise control over their environment. A large part of parent training involves working through these adaptations.



Mom: "I can tell by your expression that it's scary and exciting to be in the big chair."

Child: "I didn't know it felt like this to sit in a big chair."

4. **Keep communication a meaningful exchange** (probably the most important step for everyone). We sometimes get caught up in being teachers rather than communicators. Communication needs to occur in *real* situations. It is sometimes hard in non-speech to remember that communication is more than expressing wants and needs; it is also communicating to maintain social contact, give commands, make comments, ask questions and so much more.

If these techniques cannot become part of the daily routine for the child and the family, they will not be used for communicating. The beautiful thing about communication is that it *can* be integrated into every working activity. Indeed, working these techniques naturally into feeding, dressing, bathing, riding, playing and every other daily routine is the exciting and creative challenge of non-speech communication for young children. □

COMMUNICATION OUTLOOK

Focusing on Communication Aids and Techniques

A Quarterly Publication of the
International Action Group
for Communication
Enhancement

Communication Outlook is the only international publication focusing on communication aids and techniques for persons who experience communication handicaps. Serving as a standard reference for developments in the field of communication enhancement, it is widely read by speech pathologists, teachers, medical doctors, computer scientists, rehabilitation engineers and manufacturers, distributors and users of communication aids.

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Research and Publications



"Stilled" Signs and "Moving" Symbols

by Geb Verburg



Research and Publications is headed up by Geb Verburg, who has been involved in the field of non-speech communication since the mid-seventies. A cognitive scientist, Mr. Verburg is currently working as research officer in an OCCC project investigating the use of microcomputers with the disabled.

The Latin adage "Scripta Manent Verba Volent" — what is written remains and what is spoken flies away — applies not only to text and speech but also to symbols and signs. As might be expected, the "permanence" of symbols and the "volatility" of signs have complementary advantages and disadvantages. That is, some of the advantages of one are disadvantages in the other, and vice versa. Symbol systems allow messages to be recorded, stored, edited, printed and read at a later time. These capabilities do not readily exist in signed systems. Sign language manuals are notoriously difficult to read for the uninitiated.

Signs, however, can represent movement and action; dynamic properties that drawn or printed

symbols are ill-equipped to render convincingly. But, in my opinion, the most important advantage of signing is the direct emotional and personal involvement of the signer. Signs can be timid, reluctant, assertive, aggressive and exuberant. Thus, signing retains, in gestural form, the capability of directly qualifying the message — a capability that characterizes speech. Depending on its delivery, a single sign could say, for example: No (I don't think so); No (Definitely not); No (No way!!). In symbols, these "over-tones" can be expressed only by adding extra symbols, which tend to serialize and dilute the communication of feelings.

The "speaker's" personal involvement in performing a sign is of course not limited to the active use of the hand or hands, nor to the fact that certain body parts (e.g., head, eyes, mouth) play a role in the conversation. In signing, self and other are differentiated by reference to the signer's body, as are temporal and spatial concepts. Many of these self-related signs have a primordial and near universal significance; that is, they derive their meaning from knowledge and experience that if not inborn, then is widely shared within and across cultures.

One can ask whether it is possible to combine the benefits of a permanent system with those of a volatile system. Can signs be "stilled," or frozen, when they are drawn or printed on a two-dimensional surface? Can symbols be said to be "moving," in the sense of being both animated and more personally involving and emotionally appealing?

Possible Solutions

At the practical level of symbol and sign construction, I expect that this question has often been asked, and that many sign teachers have devised ways of arresting signs in their flight, as symbol teachers have

infused motions and emotions into static symbols. The wealth of insights that would result from the systematic compilation of these instructional techniques, and the possibility that these could be shared, would probably make such an effort worthwhile.

An entirely different solution to the problem of combining the best properties of signs and symbols is one in which children are taught or offered both sign and symbol systems. Total Communication (see *Communicating Together*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 13) is an example of such a multi-system approach. The use of multiple systems was advocated at two recent conferences held in Toronto, and initial results appear to be favourable. Children who are exposed to more than one type of system at least have a chance to become aware of both the fixed and fleeting modes of communicating. And even if a child is incapable of maintaining two or more communication systems in parallel, she/he has the option to latch on to one that suits him/her best.

A problem with the multiple systems approach is, of course, that it doubles the workload. A child must now learn, for example, both Ameslan (American Sign Language) and Blissymbols, instead of one or the other. Also, these and any other pair of parallel sign/symbol systems are not necessarily mutually supporting; nor does merely using them jointly do away with the inherent disadvantages of purely symbolic and purely signed systems.

Finally, then, two systems that have tackled the sign/symbol marriage problem head-on, one starting from symbols, the other from signs, are, respectively, Bridge Reading and Kinegraphs. Alison Dewsbury's Bridge Reading System is a logographic system which, as the name implies, forms a bridge towards reading (orthography). David Orcutt's Kinegraphs are intended as a "Worldvisual Kinesthetic Language," and consist of drawn (and potentially animated) signs.

The two systems are very different, as are the authors: Dewsbury is a teacher and Orcutt is an animator. Yet their objectives converge. Orcutt, a Canadian, has embarked

on a program to devise a printable sign system, and the Australian born Dewsbury, although her aim was to create a symbol system that could be learned and used by severely retarded children, has succeeded in devising a system that incorporates many of the self-involving aspects of signing. While only the Bridge System is currently on the market, the presence of such hybrid systems will ultimately compel the creation of a new name to signify symbols that are signs and signs that are symbols. Further detail follows for each system:

Kinegraphs

Orcutt's system uses the human potential for kinesthetic perception and sensation — the perception of movement, motion and gesture — and transfers this to paper in a few simple strokes. Many kinegraphs are constructed from existing signs drawn from different systems. Because the system is still being developed, a critique of the present drawings on the basis of knowledge of human visual processing skills must wait (*Communicating Together*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 17).

Kinegraphs have been used by a small group of people and also in animation workshops and courses in several Third World countries. The potential of animating the kinegraphs, which is built into the system, opens of course a tremendous avenue of opportunity in the field of computer graphics as in more traditional visual media.

Bridge Reading

The logographs of Bridge Reading are very well designed from the point of view of human visual processing skills. Simple drawings are used, which highlight salient features. There is no clutter, part/whole problems are avoided and similarity between distinct symbols is kept to a minimum. The logographs come in two sizes and are black-on-white line drawings which permit colouring.

What makes the Bridge Reading System exceedingly interesting is its capability for drawing and infusing personal involvement. The majority

of logographs have a signed version, consisting of a one-to-one correspondence between the sign and its logograph. This correspondence makes the gesture the acting out of the symbol. Both gestures and logographs emphasize the kinesthetic and self-referential aspects which makes the system easy to learn. And, as if these "built-in" associations were not enough, the gestures are performed with great vigour, in order to draw even the most hard-to-reach child into the orbit of this sign/symbol system.

I believe that a promising future lies in the clever integration into a single system of the best properties of signed and symbolic systems. Such a system could be more emotionally and visually stimulating than speech and orthography, and when combined with computer graphics and editing capabilities, the expressive potential of such a new language is apt to surpass that of traditional means of communication. □

For information about the Bridge Reading System, contact G. Verburg at BCI, or write directly to the publisher: Publication Sales/OISE Press, The Ontario Institute For Studies In Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6.

For information about Kinegraphs, contact David Orcutt, Perry Siding, Winlaw, British Columbia, Canada V0G 2Y0.

Answers to Symbol Quiz (from p.13)

1. a) 

b) 

c) 

2. a) maternal grandfather
b) messenger
c) unemployment

Augmentative Communication



Oakland Schools Picture Dictionary

by Jinny Storr

Jinny Storr is a Blissymbol consultant to BCI. She has been associated with Blissymbolics for many years and currently co-ordinates the International Panel on Standards for Blissymbolics.

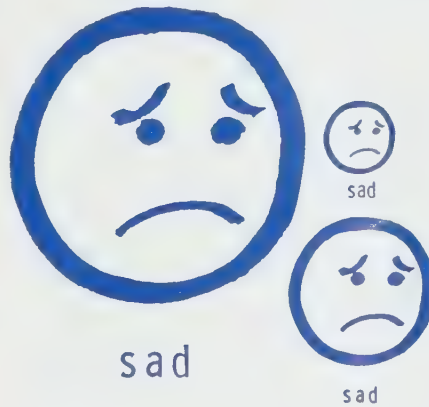
For years picture boards have been a familiar form of Augmentative Communication. Vocabularies have been laboriously created by instructors using pictures of assorted sizes and styles cut from magazines, or home-grown line drawings. The resulting picture boards are certainly useful when the vocabulary selected fits the users' needs and interests, but they leave a great deal to be desired from the point of view of instructor and user alike. For those for whom pictures are an appropriate vehicle, more accessible sources of pictures and picture formats for communication boards are clearly needed.

One response to this need is the Picture Dictionary, developed by Ina Kirstein, Communication Consultant/Clinician for the Communication Enhancement Center of Oakland Schools, Pontiac, Michigan. The Dictionary contains a picture vocabulary of approximately 500 words selected with advice from colleagues, parents and users. Line drawings representing the words are the work of artist Carol Bernstein, who as a volunteer gave her talent and uncounted hours of time to the project.

The drawings purposely contain as few lines as possible. They relate directly to the outlined shape of the thing being depicted, and they are readily understood on sight or require minimal training. The pictures are uniform in size so that they can be neatly arranged on a gridded board. They can be presented in black and white or accented with color.

The full vocabulary is presented in three different sizes — 2", 1" and ½". (The ½" size was designed for

use on the HandiVoice, but is being used for other purposes as well.) A word accompanies each drawing, but instructors are encouraged to use an accompanying word suited to the cognitive level or environment of the user. Three sizes of sample grids are also included, as are several representative communication boards.



The Dictionary vocabulary is intended for use with young pre-reading children (18 months and up), trainable and severely mentally impaired individuals, non-speaking persons with cerebral palsy, the autistic and stroke patients. The picture vocabulary itself may be augmented with material from other sources, such as photographs, rebuses, sign language, printed words or Blissymbols. As user proficiency increases, he or she may progress to a board containing representation of more abstract concepts from other systems, or may move directly from the picture vocabulary to reading.

The Dictionary contains two indices: alphabetical by word and alphabetical by subject categories. The categories covered include body parts, physical ailments and emergency situations, calendar items, clothing and accessories, emotionality, self-care, food, leisure time,

**This section of
Communicating Together
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Foundation, Toronto, Ontario.**

people, places, transportation, verbs, opposites, spatial relationships and vocational training. Sample drawings follow:

Familiar places in the community are represented by an outline of a building and a drawing of a characteristic item inside:



Many verbs are represented by drawings of people engaged in various actions:



The drawings for a few verbs are more abstract:



In recognition of the need to be specific (for some mentally impaired persons), a few words/objects are represented by two or more synonym pictures:



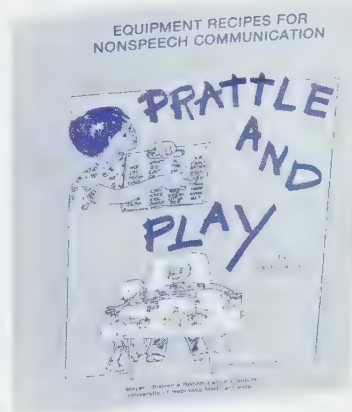
The instructor and user will choose the drawing which best suits their needs.

As with any other form of Augmentative Communication, introducing the picture vocabulary to a user must be preceded by a thorough assessment of the candidate. If a picture board is found to be the appropriate vehicle, decisions must then be carefully made as to which picture size is desirable, how many and what pictures should be introduced first and how pictures on the board will be located. For instance, when size of vocabulary and cognitive level permit, pictures should be arranged to encourage the sequenc-

ing of several pictures.

The purpose of the Picture Dictionary is to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of the user's communication potential. It can be used not only for communication boards and technical aids, but for the creation of games, the labelling of surroundings and for any situation or activity which is part of everyday living. □

For further information concerning the Picture Dictionary, contact The Communicational Enhancement Center, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Pontiac, Michigan 48054 U.S.A.



Written by Faith Carlson, speech-language pathologist with the Meyer Children's Rehabilitation Institute, and published by MCRI, *Prattle and Play* is a new softcover booklet (8½" x 11", 63 pages) geared toward professionals and parents — anyone working with the non-oral child who is interested in building toys or communicative devices.

Arranged in a recipe format much like a cookbook, and illustrated in easy-to-follow "how-to" line drawings, *Prattle and Play* is suitable for the most novice craftsperson. \$5 U.S.

Order from:
Meyer Children's
Rehabilitation Institute
444 South 44 Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68131
U.S.A.
Telephone: (402) 550-7467

Blissymbolic Profiles

by John James

John James teaches at Craig-y-Parc, one of the first United Kingdom Spastic Society schools to introduce Blissymbol communication. He lives and works in Penttyrch, Wales. In the Inaugural Issue, Mr. James outlined the standardized system of coding in use at Craig-y-Parc when recording spontaneous messages, as opposed to messages that are elicited. In this issue he expands upon what he calls an individual's "Blissymbolic profile," and presents a rationale for maintaining records of these profiles.

The use of symbol profiles started in the early months of 1979, when it became obvious that teaching symbols as one unit to my group of ten children was going to present several problems. The children were at different levels of symbol knowledge and different stages of symbol usage, and both their attitudes and motivation varied considerably.

I set as my first objective the assessment of each child's present knowledge of the symbol system. This was achieved by asking each child individually to indicate a specific symbol on his or her chart when asked to do so. If the child was successful, I recorded this information by marking a black triangle in the top left-hand corner of the symbol square on a reduced copy of the child's chart [kept for record-keeping purposes only]. This provided me with what I termed the

child's symbol facility, or *passive* vocabulary, i.e., symbols the child *could* identify.

I set as my second objective, an assessment of how successfully each child was able to use the system to communicate. This objective was achieved by using information already being recorded and coded in the children's message books (see coding description, Inaugural Issue, p. 13). Each spontaneous utterance was examined, and when a symbol had been used, a red triangle was placed in top right-hand corner of the symbol square on the reduced copy of the child's chart. This provided me with what I termed the child's symbol usage or *active* vocabulary, i.e., symbols the child *has* used spontaneously.

I was thus able to provide for each child an individual symbol profile illustrating which symbols the child *knew* and which symbols the child *used*. From the figures produced in the accompanying chart (see Figure 1), it can be seen that there was generally a wide gap between symbol facility and symbol usage.

The profiles provided the class teacher and the speech therapist with visual information upon which either individual teaching programs or small group sessions could be planned. The symbol facility information illustrated how effective previous teaching sessions had been. It was also evident with certain children that it was necessary to provide a great deal of repetition and follow-up for effective learning to take place.

Figure 1.

Child	Symbol Facility	Symbol Usage	Degree of Understandable Expressive Language
1	371	155	None
2	343	109	Poor articulation
3	366	172	None
4	368	192	Very poor articulation
5	333	169	None
6	308	152	Extremely poor articulation
7	322	155	None
8	328	153	Extremely poor articulation
9	308	137	Extremely poor articulation
10	312	114	None

The profiles became invaluable, from my point of view, when planning written work. I could now provide exercises for each individual at the appropriate level, using symbols with which I was confident he or she would be successful. The visual record of the individual's symbol knowledge also illustrated quite clearly what level of communication one might expect from each child. If, for example, the majority of known symbols were nouns, one could not expect the child's attempts at communication to be other than at a simple telegraphic level.

The information concerning which symbols each child had used in spontaneous communication isolated individual problems. For example, "Child 5" had the facility to use the past-tense indicator, but had never done so. When her recorded messages were studied, it was found that all past tenses had been formed by using the symbol for "did" — "I did go," "I did see" and "I did come."

An important result of constructing a profile showing both facility and usage is the realization that many symbols which have been taught are not being used in spontaneous communication. I term these redundant. However, it is important also to bear in mind that a symbol profile does not record *frequency* of use (certain symbols may only have been used once, and thus could be considered equally as redundant as those symbols that have not been used at all). It is therefore necessary to build into the teaching program adequate opportunities for the individual to use these infrequently used symbols, in order that redundancy does not lead to lack of retention altogether.

If an effective coding system for recording messages has been used over a period of time, it will become apparent which symbols the child needs on his or her chart in order to avoid unnecessary use of the Blissymbol strategies, or dependence upon inadequate spelling skills. It is pointless to provide a child with a new symbol which may become redundant. I would like to stress, however, that only after a sensible period of time does it become apparent whether or not a symbol is redundant. If, on the other hand, a

child is using a symbol frequently, the instructor has confirmation that the student requires direct access to it.

The views I have expressed on redundancy are based on our early work at school when our children were immersed in symbols and were using published charts. More recently we have started building up personalized charts using symbol

stamps. At this stage, whether redundancy is a factor to be considered, I am not in a position to say. I am, however, in the position to suggest that as instructors of the system we should be gently encouraged to keep accurate records in order to do justice, not only to the system and ourselves, but especially to our pupils. □

Blissymbol Learning Programs on the Apple II computer for non-speaking students

Three programs developed by Florence and John Wertz
and the
Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium

Blissboard — provides both a user's Blissboard and its diskette counterpart. Contains nearly 500 symbols.

Diskette + Manual \$35 Canada
\$35 U.S.

Bliss Library — all 1400 Blissymbols and a program on three diskettes for creating individual drills and practice activities.

3 Diskettes + Manual \$95 Canada
\$96 U.S.

Available in Canada from:
Blissymbolics Communication
Institute
350 Rumsey Road
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 1R8

Bliss Drills — designed to aid the learning of individual Blissymbols and to distinguish them from one another. Contains fourteen different drills.

1 Diskette + Manual \$35 Canada
\$36 U.S.

Available in U.S. from:
Minnesota Educational Computing
Consortium
2520 Broadway Drive
St. Paul, Minnesota 55113
U.S.A.

For Your Information

Blissymbol components used in section headings and design...

Now, with accompanying words:

person 	we, us 	public 	woman 	family 	God 	about, of 	minus, without
(to) communicate 	(to) share 	(to) teach 	(to) learn 	(to) read 	(to) write 	(to) hope 	(to) win
cause 	science 	knowledge 	opinion 	event 	idea 	(to) help, aid 	Blissymbol
machine 	computer 	thing 	schedule 	paper, page 	book 	plural indicator 	combine indicator
question 	international 	news 	and, also 	along with 	belongs to, of (possessive) 	from 	to, towards

Readers Write



Breaking Out

by Catherine Hines

Catherine Hines sent us the symbol letter below. She uses a head pointer to communicate. She also paints and hooks rugs with her head pointer.

Catherine Hines, Association for the Help of Retarded Children, 2900 Veteran's Memorial Highway, Bohemia, N.Y. 11716, U.S.A.

Dear Communicating Together,

I truly like the format and content of the brochure attached to your order form. However, I am really surprised to see that Blissymbolics was not included in the list of alternative means of communication for those who *can* read. I can't imagine that Kari is the only kid who can read who still sometimes uses symbols to aid her in communicating!

I do not believe symbols are just a bridge to reading; they are communication tools that have been established. The kids will likely acquire other tools to help meet their needs, but why would they completely abandon such an effective and meaningful system? I also think

signing and finger spelling should have been mentioned.

I feel fairly strongly about this and hope you will pass along my feelings to the powers that be.

Sincerely,

Ruth Harrington, parent
Markham, Ontario

*Dear Mrs. Harrington,
Thank you for bringing these points to our attention. If other readers have thoughts concerning this subject, they are invited to comment as well.*

*** ** *

Readers are invited to contribute letters with comments and requests to this regular column.



I went to see the movie *Breakthrough* at the United Nations, New York City.

Breakthrough was about Cerebral Palsy people like me. Special people need

[a] special life. They need help to work, eat, drink, [and] go

to parties. Cerebral Palsy people are opposite sick [well]. They [should] not live

in institutions. I live in an institution. I want

to go to a special house for Cerebral Palsy people. A social worker told me

about the Intermediary Care Facility. She will help me to enter the ICF I had

an IQ test. I was afraid because I thought I would not

get in. My speech therapist said to be opposite afraid.

I feel good because of symbols. Before I couldn't speak.

Now I say many things with the symbol board. I like

to get symbol letters. I like to write to friends.

Schedule of Events



BCI Elementary Workshops

BCI Elementary Workshop training sessions are held throughout the year and provide professionals and families with an opportunity to learn about Blissymbolics. The workshops include thirty hours of lectures, and group and individual assignments.

Forthcoming Workshops:

In Ontario

—July 5-8, and

—October 17-20, 1983

Ontario Crippled Children's Centre, Toronto

Contact: Blissymbolics Communication Institute, 350 Rumsey Road Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4G 1R8 Telephone: (416) 425-7835

—June 27-29, 1983 in Sault Ste. Marie

Contact: Mrs. Marquise Sopher Algoma District Mental Retardation Service, 205 McNabb Street, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada P6B 1Y3

Telephone: (705) 254-6487

July 5-7 in Guelph

Contact: Sue Lawton, Speech and Language Services, Wellington County Board of Education, 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1E 6K2 Telephone: (519) 822-4420 Ext. 296

In Michigan

— May 16-18 in Port Huron

Contact: Terry Rudolph, Life Consultation Center, 805 - 10th Street, Suite C, Port Huron, MI 48060 U.S.A.

In Vermont

— June 3-4 in Rutland

Contact: Doris J. Farenkopf, Vermont Achievement Center, 88 Park Street, Rutland, Vermont 05701 U.S.A.

In Wisconsin

— August 17-19 in Madison

Contact: Aleta Barmore, Communication Programs, U.W. Extension Madison, Room 225 Lowell Hall 610 Langdon Street, Madison WI 53706 U.S.A. Telephone: (608) 262-4379

In Massachusetts

September 30 - October 3 in Boston

Contact: Denise Riley Okeen 14 Cedar Drive, Canton, MA. 02021 U.S.A.

In England

— July 22-26 at Castle Priory

College, Wallingford Contact: Castle Priory College Thames Street, Wallingford Oxfordshire OX10 OHE, England

In West Germany

— September 1983 in Dusseldorf

Contact: Mr. Hermann Frey Rotthausen Weg 34, 4000 Dusseldorf 12, West Germany

In India

—September in Calcutta and Mysore

Contact: Mrs. Anne Warrick Ottawa Crippled Children's Treatment Centre, P.O. Box 8469 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3H9 Telephone: (613) 737-0871

Advance Notice 1984 - The Bright Side

The Second International Conference on Rehabilitation Engineering combined with the Seventh Annual Conference on Rehabilitation Engineering

The Second International Conference on Rehabilitation Engineering will be held in Ottawa, Canada, from June 17-22, 1984, at the new Congress Centre located in the heart of Canada's capital. The theme of the conference is "Technology for Improving the Quality of Life."

For information contact Conference Services, National Research Council of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0R6.

Trace Center Workshop Schedule

In Pennsylvania

—May 13, 14, 1983. Development of Communication and Interaction in Non-Vocal Children and Adults.

Contact: Mata Jaffe, Rehabilitation Institute of Pittsburgh, 6301 Northumberland Street, Pittsburgh, PA. 15217 U.S.A.

Purdue University Summer Sessions

Purdue University offers a smorgasbord of offerings on **Meeting the Communication Needs of the Severely Handicapped: Alternative and Augmentative Approaches**

- Non-speech Communication (3 credits) June 13-24
- Advanced Practicum in Assessment and Intervention Strategies (3 credits) Tuesdays: June 14-August 2
- Seminar on Meeting the Communication Needs of the Severely Handicapped (3 credits) Thursdays: June 16-July 28

Contact: Lyle L. Lloyd, Ph.D. Professor and Chairman of Special Education and Professor of Audiology and Speech Sciences Purdue University, South Campus Courts, Bldg. E., West Lafayette, Indiana, 47907 U.S.A.

Internship 1983

In Toronto

—Oct. 11 to Nov. 11

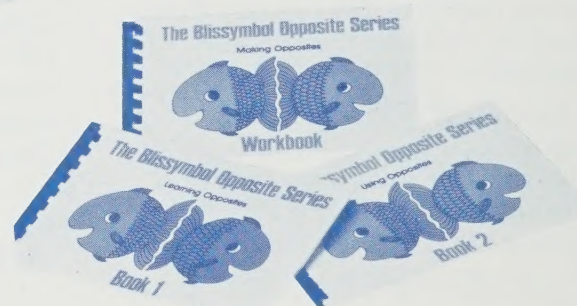
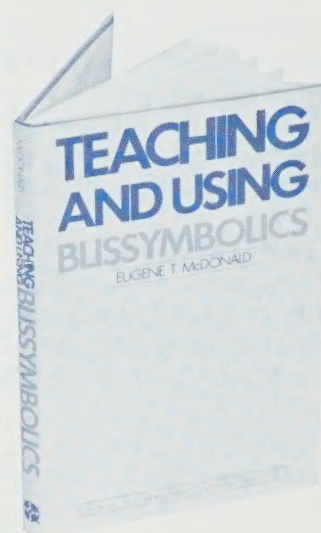
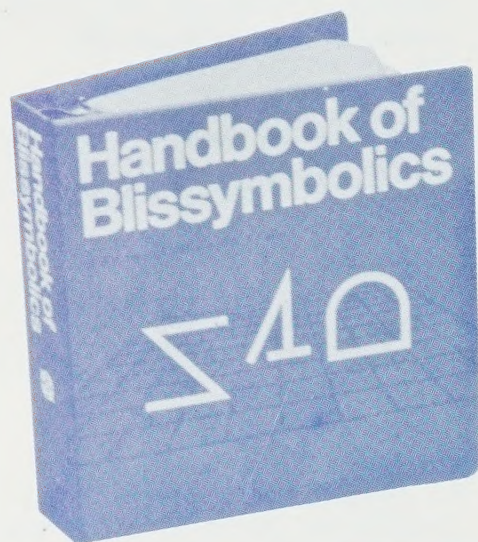
The Blissymbolics Communication Institute's **Internship Program**, held in Toronto each autumn, provides special training for professionals who are responsible for developing and supporting Blissymbol programs in their country or region. Activities included in the five-week program are an Elementary Training Workshop, observation and participation in clinical and classroom settings and individualized study in areas of special interest.

For further information write Mrs. M. Spicer, Blissymbolics Communication Institute.

BCI PUBLICATIONS

The Blissymbolics Communication Institute
produces and distributes

a variety of textbooks and materials on teaching and using Blissymbols



For information write:

In Canada

Blissymbolics Communication
Institute
350 Rumsey Road
Toronto, Ontario M4G 1R8

In the Province of Quebec for
publication in the French
language:

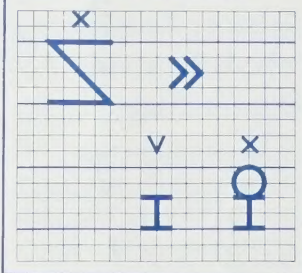
Association de Paralyisie
Cérébrale du Québec Inc.
525 Boul. Hamel est.
Suite A-50
Quebec G1M 2S8

In the United States

EBSCO Curriculum Materials
Box 1943
Birmingham, Al. 35201

Blissymbols For Preschool Children

ANNE WARRICK



In the United Kingdom

Living and Learning
Duke Street
Wisbech
Cambs PE132AE
England

